



June 24, 2011

Via Electronic Mail

Delta Stewardship Council
980 Ninth Street, Suite 1500
Sacramento, CA 95814

Electronic Mail: DeltaPlanComment@deltacouncil.ca.gov

SUBJECT: COMMENTS REGARDING FOURTH DRAFT DELTA PLAN

Dear Council Staff:

WateReuse California appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Fourth Draft Delta Plan. WateReuse California is an organization of individuals, public agencies and businesses dedicated to promoting responsible stewardship of California's water resources by maximizing the safe, practical and beneficial use of recycled water. Our members have worked with state agencies and nongovernmental organizations on a number of key initiatives designed to increase the use of recycled water throughout the state, including establishment of the Governor's Water Recycling Task Force in 2002 and the revised Water Recycling Policy, adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board in 2009.

We are pleased that the Fourth Draft Delta Plan recognizes the importance of local and regional water conservation and water supply development programs, including water recycling, in achieving the co-equal goals of providing a more reliable water supply and ecosystem restoration. WateReuse California generally supports the proposed increased emphasis on addressing local and regional sustainable water supplies through measures such as recycling. We are concerned, however, that (1) the Draft Plan focuses on local agencies and does not identify specific recommended actions that should be taken by *State* agencies to eliminate known barriers to achieving recycling goals, and (2) the benefits of facilitating and incentivizing water recycling as a new sustainable water supply are not sufficiently emphasized. Numerous obstacles to additional recycling can only be addressed by State agency actions, including those relating to funding and regulatory reform. Many of these were detailed in *Water Recycling 2030: Recommendations of California's Recycled Water Task Force* (June 2003.) We request the Council include the following recommended State agency actions in the Delta Plan:

Recycling Water to Meet the World's Needs

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- The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) should complete the update of the Title 17 and Title 22 to facilitate the use of recycled water for non-potable indoor uses. The draft updates were developed and agreed to by members of the Recycled Water Task Force and have been posted on Department of Public Health's website for over five years. While the Department of Water Resources and the California Building Standards Commission have modified California's Plumbing Code to support recycled water use and while this use is encouraged by green building codes, the outdated provisions of Title 17 and Title 22 result in mandatory shutdowns, disruption to business and additional costs, all of which dissuade customers from using recycled water.
- The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), Department of Public Health and the Department of Water Resources should actively engage in research and science-based review of the recycled water resource and this review should be the foundation for future regulation. The State Water Board's science panel on Constituents of Emerging Concern serves as model for sound, rational public policy that fairly balances resource needs with potential risks.
- Building from a solid basis of science, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Public Health, and State Water Board should adopt a state-sponsored media campaign to increase public awareness and knowledge of recycled water. (Recommendation 2.4).
- To allow for thorough technical and public review, Department of Public Health and the State Water Board should be encouraged to implement the provisions of SB 918 (Pavley), on or ahead of schedule.
- The State Water Board should convene a group of stakeholders for the purpose of developing a Water Recycling Policy applicable to agricultural irrigation uses.

The Legislature has declared that "the people of the state have a primary interest in the development of facilities to supplement existing water supplies and minimize the impacts of growing demand for new water on sensitive water bodies" and "a substantial portion of the future water requirements of the state may be economically met by the beneficial use of recycled water." (Water Code section 13529.) More recently, the State Water Board issued a call to action:

The collapse of the Bay-Delta ecosystem, climate change, and continuing population growth have combined with a severe drought on the Colorado River and failing levees in the Delta to create a new reality that challenges California's ability to provide the clean water needed for a healthy environment, a healthy population and a healthy economy, both now and in the future. These challenges also present an unparalleled opportunity for California to move aggressively towards a sustainable water future.... We strongly encourage local and regional water agencies to move toward clean, abundant, local water for California by

emphasizing appropriate water recycling, water conservation, and maintenance of supply infrastructure and the use of stormwater (including dry-weather urban runoff) in these plans; these sources of supply are drought-proof, reliable, and minimize our carbon footprint and can be sustained over the long-term. (Recycled Water Policy at p.1 (2009).)

WateReuse California understands the importance of local water supply planning, and our members are committed to advancing recycled water through their local plans and projects. However, the only way California can achieve its recycling goals is with a vigorous state and local partnership. We believe the Council should strongly promote water recycling *in particular* as a way to provide a more reliable water supply from local resources and reduce pressure on the Delta and include recommendations for both state and local actions needed to ensure the development of this sustainable and reliable water supply.

We would be pleased to discuss our proposal with you further. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact me at (916) 669-8401 or dsmith@watereuse.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W. Smith', written in a cursive style.

David W. Smith, PhD
Managing Director